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Sleeping Flower

Nemureru Mori

by Ebihara Yuri

CHOCOLAT COMICS

眠れる花

海老原由里

眠れる花

海老原由里

心交社

CHOCOLAT COMICS

NEMURERU MORI (SLEEPING FLOWER)

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YURI EBIHARA

眠れる花
1st Story

WITH THIS HATRED
AND THIS SADNESS
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF I HADN'T BEEN MADE AWARE OF THEM.
AH...
MASAMI?

This will hold only four of them
IT'S SUCH A WASTE SINCE IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL...
HOW LOVELY! A TREE OF BLUE ROSES?
CHRISTMAS ENDS TODAY SO
THIS WILL HAVE TO BE SETTLED BY MIDNIGHT
IT IS BEAUTIFUL BUT...
BUT THOSE BLUE ROSES...
I WONDER IF THAT PERSON MADE THIS

EH?!
HEY, COULD YOU ASK THAT GUY FOR A BOUQUET?
THERE'S NO WAY.
BESIDES, WOULDN'T I BE BOTHERING HIM AT HIS JOB?
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT UNLESS YOU ASK HIM, RIGHT?
THAT WOULD BE SO NICE! BLUE ROSES ARE SO RARE
MASUMI, COULD YOU GO OVER THERE FOR A BIT AND ASK?
YUMI-CHAN.

Cheh
EXCUSE ME...
YUMI-CHAN
WHATEVER, I'M GOING.
BUT...
STEP
STEP
THE ONE WHO MADE THE TREE,
IS IT YOU?

.....
UM...

EXCUSE ME BUT IT'S DANGEROUS SO PLEASE DON'T APPROACH
Exhales
WAIT A MINUTE, SATOU
SENSEI?!
THE ONE WHO MADE IT IS ME...
IT'S AMAZING; YOU SEEM SO YOUNG THOUGH.
SENSEI!
YUMI-CHAN.
WHAT IS IT?

SORRY FOR SO SUDDENLY...
THAT TREE IS SO BEAUTIFUL THAT
WE WANTED TO ASK IF YOU WOULDN'T MAKE A BOUQUET FOR US?
BOUQUET?
YEAH, FOR A WEDDING BOUQUET.
BECAUSE WE ARE GETTING MARRIED
BUT ASKING YOU FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS ALL OF A SUDDEN IS AN INCONVENIENCE...
PARDON US
.....

KYA, REALLY?!
EH... IS THAT OKAY?
YES.
(UMMMM)
I'D LIKE TO DO A DETAILED ARRANGE-MENT SO
WOULD YOU MIND COMING TO THE OFFICE?
HANAICHI*
PRESIDENT
Ryouke Taka
HERE YOU GO.
SORRY FOR BEING SO SLOW
*THE "HANAICHI" IS THE NAME OF THE F FLOWER COMPANY AND CAN BE TRANS-LATED AS "FLOWERS FIRST." THE KANJ USED HERE MEANS "FLOWER" BUT ALSO HAS A DOUBLE MEANING OF "BRILLEN-PORT OR "BEAUTIFUL" SO IN A WAY HE S ALSO SAYING "BEAUTY FIRST."
THAT...
CONGRATU-LATIONS
IF I'M ABLE, I'LL DO IT
YOUR WEDDING BOUQUET

Nice to meet you.
I'M AIKAWA MASUMI
THIS IS MY GIRLFRIEND, KATAOKA YUMIKO
I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU
Smile
PLEASE DO COME TOGETHER TO THE OFFICE ..
Hey, it's it good we tried asking?

NOW, RETURN TO DOING THE ROSES
Yes
I ALSO WANT TO COME SINCE I MIGHT AS WELL BE OFF WORK.
Is this a hotel?!
AAH... YOU'RE GOING UP TO THE ROOM ABOVE, HUH?
Chch
.....
CLENCH

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
YES.
WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT IS NEXT WEEK.
AT THIS RATE, I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO MAKE IT BY THE PROMISED TIME.
AIKAWA-SAN,
THESE DOCUMENTS ARRIVED FROM SAGAMI TRADING COMPANY WHILE YOU WERE ON THE PHONE.
THEY'D LIKE AN ANSWER BY 1 AM TOMORROW.
THANK YOU
PLEASE DO COME TOGETHER...

Hey, hey, Masumi.
Did you know he was so awesome?!
HUH?
AS I THOUGHT, TONIGHT'S MEETING
SHOULD BE ATTENDED BY YUMIKO ALONE
That flower shop!
The florist of the one that we're going to?
He's actually pretty famous.
REALLY.
I'm waiting for you so please come quickly.
ALREADY MY FRIENDS AND PARENTS ARE SO IMPRESSED.
I HEARD ABOUT IT FROM SOMEONE AT THE OFFICE.
THEY WERE SHOCKED THAT WE SOMEHOW KNEW SOMEONE LIKE THAT.

IT CAN'T BE HELPED
rustle
ISN'T IT A NICE PLACE WHERE THEY HAVE THEIR OFFICE?
I'LL BRING THESE DOCUMENTS BACK?
Here Here
YEAH
click
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK
WELL THEN, I'LL SEND YOU THE SAMPLE MAGAZINE WHEN IT'S READY
Thank you very much

SORRY FOR COMING SO LATE.
IT'S FINE.
MY INTERVIEW ALSO WENT LONG
Please
click
Here you go
AH!
I SAW YOUR ARTICLE!
RYOUKE TAKAHISA.
THE SPIRITED UP-AND-COMING FLOWER DESIGNER!

IT'S BEEN WRITTEN THAT YOU WERE THE WINNER OF A BIG COMPETITION IN EUROPE.
BESIDES JAPAN, YOU HAVE ACTIVITIES IN THE WEST AS WELL
YOU'RE DISTINGUISHED BY BEING WIDELY KNOWN PRIMARILY FOR GREAT DISPLAYS AT THINGS LIKE HOTELS AND MEMORIAL CEREMONIES.
WELL, I ORIGINALLY LIVED IN FRANCE.
EVEN SO, I THINK IT'S AMAZING..
BECAUSE I WAS ALWAYS LIVING WITH FLOWERS NEARBY,
Sideway glance
IT'S NOT THAT BIG OF A DEAL
BEFORE I KNEW IT, I HAD BEGUN WALKING ON THIS PATH.

clink
ARE YOU REALLY GOING WITH THOSE?
Oh
That tree
BUT, YOU LIKED THEM TOO, RIGHT?
EH?!
BLUE ROSES WOULD BE NICE!
WHAT IS WITH HIM..
BESIDES BEING A BOUQUET, DO YOU HAVE COLORS OR A SHAPE IN MIND?
A PURE WHITE DRESS WITH BLUE ROSES,
IT'LL DEFINITELY BE WONDERFUL!
THAT'S TRUE BUT I THINK IT WOULD LOOK BETTER WITH TWO DIFFERENT FLOWERS
BU—
BUT...
BLUE ROSES, I WONDER IF THEY WOULD BE THAT EASY TO GET.

USING THE TECHNIQUE BY HOZAI, THEY'LL CONTINUE TO BLOOM FOR MANY YEARS
opens
THESE FLOWERS ARE ALSO CALLED "SLEEPING FLOWERS."
BECAUSE THEY'VE BEEN SPECIALLY PROCESSED, THESE FLOWERS ARE LEFT WITH A SEEMINGLY FRESH TEXTURE.
IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT PRESERVED FLOWERS, THEY'VE BEEN ARTIFICIALLY COLORED.
ISHII.
Smirks
THE RICH ARE THE ONES WHO CAN USE FRESH BLUE ROSES.
NO WAY
REAL ONES?
THAT IS TO SAY...

SLEEPING FLOWERS...
IN THAT CASE, I WONDER IF WE SHOULDN'T DECORATE THE ENTIRE HALL WITH THEM...
DECORATE THE HALL WITH THESE FLOWERS?!
WELL, WE'VE GONE TO SUCH TROUBLE TO ASK RYOUKE-SAN TO DO THIS FOR US.
It'll be a shame to just do the bouquet with them
BUT WHY ARE YOU SAYING THIS ALL OF A SUDDEN...
I DON'T MIND IF I CAN FIT IT IN MY SCHEDULE
ONLY THESE FLOWERS ARE QUITE EXPENSIVE IN COMPARISON TO FRESH FLOWERS.

IF WE DO THE ENTIRE HALL, IT'LL BE A PRETTY LARGE SUM OF MONEY...
IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT THAT IT'S OKAY
NO MATTER HOW MUCH IT IS, THIS PERSON WILL PAY IT.
RIGHT?
YES
WHAT ENVIABLE WORDS..
SO YOU RUN YOUR OWN BUSINESS?
NO, I'M A REGULAR OFFICE WORKER.
I JUST WANT TO DO EVERYTHING THAT'S WITHIN MY LIMIT...

THE WEDDING CEREMONY HAS BEEN DECIDED RECENTLY SO—
IF IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, THEN IT'S REALLY OKAY WITH JUST THE BOUQUET.
Flips
NO, A SPOT JUST OPENED UP.
IT'S OKAY.
ANYWAY, WHEN IS THE CEREMONY?
IT'S RATHER SUDDEN BUT IT'S THE LAST SATURDAY IN FEBRUARY.
MMM, BUT I WONDER IF IT'LL BE OKAY WITH SUCH A FRIGID LOOKING COLOR...
WOULDN'T IT BE NICE?
Closes
BESIDES, THERE'S THAT IF A BRIDE SAYING THAT WEARS SOMETHING BLUE, SHE WILL BECOME HAPPY.
THAT'S TRUE, BLUE IN FEBRUARY IS A BIT MUCH...

A BLUE BOUQUET,
STEPPING ON THE BLUE ROSES,
FILLED TO THE UTMOST WITH BLUE ROSES,
PLEASE BY ALL MEANS, BE HAPPY.

EVEN THOUGH HE'S A BIT OLD FASHIONED, HE HAS THE FEELING OF A NICE BOY.
YOUNGER THAN US BY FOUR YEARS !!
HE COMES OFF VERY LEVEL-HEADED.
HOW SO?
IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY, I READ IN A MAGAZINE HE'S 25 YEARS OLD.
.....
YOU LIKED HIM?
EH
HA-HA.
IF I HAD TO SAY, HE'S THE TYPE I DISLIKE.
STEP
IT'S TRUE THAT I THOUGHT HE WAS A GOOD YOUNG MAN BUT...

WHERE ARE THE DOCUMENTS?
WHAT IS IT? MASUMI?
WITH THAT WAY THAT HE CAN STARE AT YOU,
IT'S UNSETTLING...
IT SEEMS LIKE I'VE FORGOT SOMETHING
SORRY, LEAVE AHEAD OF ME
IT'S PROBABLY AT THAT GUY'S OFFICE.

I DON'T FEEL LIKE GOING BACK BUT...
I HAVE TO LOOK OVER THEM TONIGHT.
I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT WHETHER I SHOULD CONTACT YOU
AIKAWA-SAN, YOU FORGOT AN ENVELOPE, RIGHT?
WHERE ARE THE OTHER PEOPLE..?
THEY'VE LEFT
MY APPOINTMENT TODAY WITH YOU WAS MY LAST AFTER ALL
THERE IT IS AGAIN...

EXCUSE ME...
HAVE WE MET SOME-WHERE BEFORE?
THEN I WONDER WHY DOES HE STARE AT ME LIKE THAT?
STARE
.....
NO?
BLUE ROSES!
PLEASE
WAIT WHILE I GO GET IT
IT'S OKAY.
THESE ARE NOT THE ROSES OF THAT TIME
THESE ARE COMPLETELY MAN-MADE.

RYOUKE-SAN..!
DO YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN BLUE ROSES?
Surprised
THAT..
ACTUALLY, I SEEM TO HAVE A MEMORY OF SEEING THEM IN THE PAST—
CLENCH
REALLY?
BUT IT WAS AROUND THE TIME I WAS A MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT.
IT WAS NEAR THE PLACE WHERE WE LIVED BACK THEN
THERE WAS A HOUSE THAT CULTIVATED MANY TYPES OF ROSES EXCLUSIVELY.

THE OLD MAN THERE WOULD LET ME FROM TIME TO TIME SEE THE GARDEN.
THE BLUE ROSES WERE BLOOMING—
EITHER WAY,
IT WAS A PLACE THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL LIKE A DREAM—
SO I ALSO DIDN'T REALIZE THAT IT WAS A DIFFERENT FLOWER FROM THOSE
BUT I KNEW THAT WHEN I BECAME AN ADULT,
I WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO REPRODUCE THE BLUE ROSES.

SQUEEZE
WHY ?

BANG
STO...
WH—
Pulls
COUGH
WHY...
RYOUKE-SAN
STOP.

BITES
!
RYOUKE-SAN..
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
...
WHY ARE YOU DOING SUCH A THING...?!

SFX. PUSH
BAM
WHAT...
UGH...
...
float float

!
Ah...
NO—

thump
twists
shivers
AH
slides down
NGH
THRUST
CLENCH

NO
WHY...
NO...
THRUST
UGH...
CLENCH
NGH...
WHY ALL OF THIS...?!
PLEASE HAVE MERCY.
ONLY YOU,

*TN: MASUMI USES "YURUSHITE" WHICH MEANS TO "LEAVE OFF" OR "EXCUSE" HIM. WHAT HE MEANS IS FOR TAKAHISA TO LET HIM GO OR STOP WHAT HE'S DOING ALREADY. TAKAHISA RETURNS WITH "YURUSANAI," THE VERY SAME WORD MASUMI USED ONLY NEGATED WHICH MEANS ALSO HAS THE MEANING OF "FORGIVE". SO IN THIS CASE, HE WON'T FORGIVE HIM.

THE CLOSE AT HAND BALL THAT WENT CRAZY
CROSSES THE BLUE SKY,
Clunk
AND WITH HESITATION I WENT INTO THE SECRET FLOWER GARDEN.

眠れる花
2nd Story

AH, SORRY.
IT'S NO-THING.
Rustle
Flinch
MY BODY HAS HAD LIBERTIES TAKEN WITH IT.
Sigh
IT'S NOT JUST THAT I'VE BEEN MOLESTED BY A GUY
.....
Clank
IT'S NOT THAT
IN THOSE EYES, I...
SHARP PAIN

THERE WAS SOMETHING I COULDN'T READ REFLECTED IN HIS EYES..
I WAS SCARED
EVEN IF IT WAS JUST SCORN OR LUST,
—ANGER?
THE ONE THING THAT MADE ITSELF CLEAR TO ME WAS
WE'VE ONLY MET TWICE BEFORE
CAN I HAVE MADE HIM HATE ME THAT MUCH ALREADY?
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
OR MAYBE I REALLY HAVE MADE HIS ACQUAINTANCE BEFORE...?
"I WILL NOT FORGIVE YOU."
PER-HAPS
I BROUGHT THIS ONTO MYSELF BY INVITING HIM WITHOUT REALIZING IT?

"IF IT'S YOU, I WILL NOT FORGIVE YOU. NEVER."
NO WAY—
COULD IT BE RELATED TO THAT INCIDENT..?
BUT HE WON'T "FORGIVE ME"—
AIKAWA-SAN
pat
Flinch
AH—
ARE YOU OKAY? YOUR FACE IS PALE
Good morning

LAST NIGHT...
BESIDES, I DON'T KNOW IF I HAD HEARD IT WRONG WHEN I BECAME FAINT.
THANK YOU.
THE FIRST GENERAL IMPRESSION OF THAT GUY WAS I DON'T THINK I COULD FORGET HOW EASYGOING HE WAS.
I'M BEING STUPID.
I WAS JUST LOST IN THOUGHT...
WELL, THEN THAT'S GOOD
MY BAD HABIT IS TO CONNECT THAT INCIDENT WITH ANYTHING ELSE.
IT'LL BE PROBLEMATIC IF YOU HAVE TO TAKE A BREAK THIS TIME OF YEAR
Please be careful, okay...?
EVEN THOUGH HE ATTACKED ME, THERE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN NO REASON FOR IT.
BUT I WAS PRESENT AT THAT PLACE ONLY BY CHANCE...
RATTLE
A CUSTOMER IS HERE TO SEE YOU
AIKAWA-SAN.

I CAME TO DELIVER THESE
rustle
YOU DIDN'T COME TO TAKE THESE BACK YESTERDAY?
SHOCKED
WHY...
WHY ARE YOU HERE..?!
AH..
THO-THOSE
Thanks
!
GRABS
YOUR BODY SEEMS FINE.
YOU SEEMED TO HAVE GOTTEN ACCUSTOMED TO IT IT YESTERDAY AS WELL.

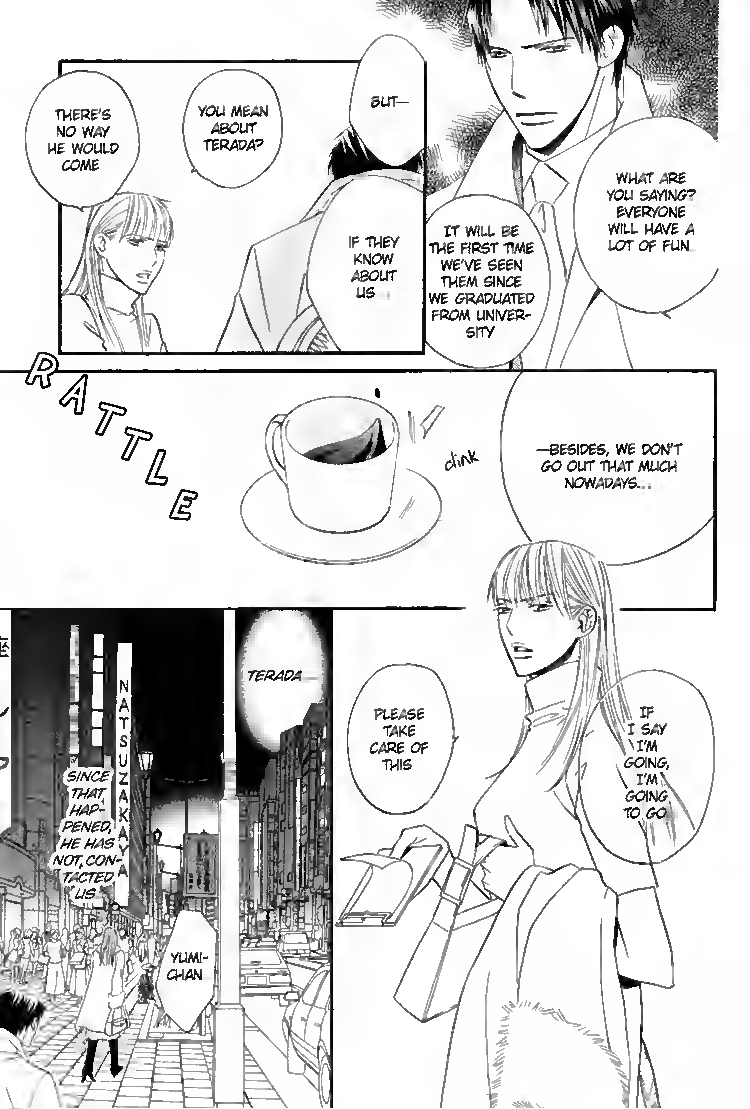
SILENCE
AH...
AT THE END, YOU APPEARED REALLY INTO IT...
STOP.
Chuckles
WELL, HERE
I WOULD LIKE YOU TO PLAN TO COME AND PREVIEW THE CEREMONY HALL THOUGH
EH
PREVIEW..
YOU'RE STILL PLANNING ON CONTINUING WITH THE REQUEST?
UNLESS YOU WANT TO EXPLAIN IT TO YUMIKO-SAN?
I DON'T THINK YOU WANT TO DO THAT

SOMETHING OF THAT LEVEL WOULD STOP THE WEDDING FROM HAPPENING
YUMIKO WOULD...
THAT HER OWN FIANCÉ WAS RAPED BY ANOTHER GUY...
Ding
.....
PLEASE DON'T PROVOKE MY GIRLFRIEND JUST FOR YOUR PLEASURE
—HEH.
Ding
RYOUKE-SAN..?
YOU REALLY LOVE EACH OTHER, HUH?

RYOUKE-SAN!
I DON'T KNOW IF I HEARD IT WRONG BUT
YESTER-DAY...
YOU SAID TO ME "I WON'T FORGIVE YOU!"—?
I DIDN'T SAY IT
DID YOU DO SOMETHING THAT COULD NOT BE FORGIVEN?
.....

DO YOU KNOW THE FLOWER MEANING OF BLUE ROSES?
THAT'S RIGHT, AIKAWA-SAN
NO
bows
THANK YOU FOR THE DOCUMENTS.
BANG
We're pushing our schedule
I COULD HAVE DELIVERED THE MATERIALS MYSELF
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WAIT
NOTHING
WHAT...?
click
IT'S OKAY ONCE IN A WHILE

YOU LOOK LIKE SOMETHING GOOD HAPPENED TO YOU
MI...
MASUMI?
SURPRISED
WHAT IS IT? YOU'RE ACTING A BIT STRANGE.
AH...
SORRY
ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME? WE SHOULD GO
MY BODY IS ONCE AGAIN JARRED
BESIDES—
MAYBE WE SHOULD SKIP
THE CLUB'S END OF THE YEAR PARTY
CLENCH


THERE'S NO WAY HE WOULD COME
YOU MEAN ABOUT TERADA?
BUT—
IF THEY KNOW ABOUT US
IT WILL BE THE FIRST TIME WE'VE SEEN THEM SINCE WE GRADUATED FROM UNIVERSITY
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? EVERYONE WILL HAVE A LOT OF FUN
RATTLE
clink
—BESIDES, WE DON'T GO OUT THAT MUCH NOWADAYS...
IF I SAY I'M GOING, I'M GOING TO GO
PLEASE TAKE CARE OF THIS
TERADA—
NATSUZAKA
SINCE THAT HAPPENED, HE HAS NOT CONTACTED US
YUMI-CHAN

EVEN THOUGH THE THREE OF US WERE ALWAYS TOGETHER—
SORRY, YUMI-CHAN
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
BLUE ROSES?
DO YOU KNOW THE FLOWER MEANING OF BLUE ROSES?
WELL...
WHY ALL OF A SUDDEN?
STEP
STEP
IT'S JUST THAT I HAD THIS CONVERSATION WITH RYOUKE-SAN RECENTLY.
RYOUKE-SAN?
YOU MET HIM AFTER THE MEETING?
AH, IN THE END, HE DELIVERED THE THINGS I FORGOT ON THE NEXT DAY
.....

SENSEI, THAT'S .
YUMI-CHAN AND AIKAWA-SAN ARE GETTING MARRIED?!
SORRY FOR TROUBLING YOU WHEN YOU'RE BUSY
Clink!
TONIGHT, PLEASE EAT TO YOUR HEARTS' CONTENT.
BUT, YOU'VE ARRANGED SUCH BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS FOR THE STORE.
I KNEW IT WAS A GOOD IDEA TO ASK RYOUKE-SAN FOR THIS
WOW
THANK YOU FOR THE MEAL.
Here I go

YOU'LL DEFINITELY BE HAPPIER WITH AIKAWA-KUN THAN WITH TERADA.
RIGHT, RIGHT.
IS THAT SO. THAT'S GREAT, YUMIKO
I HAD THOUGHT I HADN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE BUT SINCE WHEN..
IT'S A BIT SOON BUT IT'S FEBRUARY OF NEXT YEAR
THAT'S RIGHT.
FOR US, YOU ARE THE FLAT-OUT WINNER.
BESIDES, IT'S GOOD FOR YOU TO SHOW OFF.
And it was to a colossal degree
HE ONLY SEEMED GOOD ON THE OUTSIDE
BESIDES THE GIRLS AND THE MONEY, HE WAS A LOT OF TROUBLE.
WHY ARE YOU BEST FRIENDS WITH THAT KIND OF GUY WHO GOES THROUGH LOVERS THAT EASILY? IT WAS WEIRD.
HMM? BUT I HEARD THAT TERADA WILL BE COMING TODAY?
TERADA IS?!

—WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?
TERADA!
Shocked
AND YOU TWO SAY YOU'RE GOING TO BE GETTING MARRIED SOON...
YOU AND YUMIKO, MAR-RIAGE?
WHO SAID YOU COULD DO THAT?
FLINCH
MASUMI,
I THOUGHT SINCE IT WAS YOU I COULD ENTRUST YOU WITH IT?
BUT AT THIS RATE, YUMIKO-CHAN WILL...

AS ALWAYS, THIS MAN IS STILL...
.....
AH!
YOU'VE LET ME DOWN.
AH?
blink
THAT'S THE ONE THING I WON'T ALLOW
WELL, WITH REGARDS TO THE MARRIAGE, I WILL ALSO HAND IT OVER TO YOU.
BUT THAT'S THE ONLY THING.
SORRY.
WHOOSH
...
YOU'LL DO AS I'VE SAID—

!
RYOUKE-SAN?!
WHAT THE HELL, YOU.
IS THIS AN ACQUAINTANCE OF YOURS?
OUTSIDERS SHOULD STAY OUT OF THIS.
HE'S GOING TO GET HIT..
BAM
TWIST
OW!
TWIST
OW,
IT HURTS.

PLEASE STOP!
!
I'M GONNA BEAT YOU SO BAD, EVEN BUGS WILL RUN FROM YOU
TERADA,
RUN!
B
A
M
AH!
CHEH.

YOU HAD TO BE RESCUED BECAUSE OF THAT GUY.
WHY PROTECT HIM?!
YOU CAN'T DO THIS, RYOUKE-SAN.
THE WEEKLY MAGAZINE NEWS IS CAPABLE OF PICKING THIS UP.
...JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE GAY, PLEASE DON'T GROUP STRANGERS IN WITH YOU.
ME?
I'M COMPLETELY NORMAL
I CAN RESCUE YOU EVEN IF HE WASN'T A HOMO
DON'T SAY THAT WHILE MAKING A KIND FACE

AND YOU, WHEN WE'RE DOING IT TOGETHER,
YOU HAVE A HABIT OF SAYING "HII HII" WHEN I'M THRUSTING INTO YOUR ASS.
PLEASE STOP IT...!
THEN FROM NOW ON, I'LL DO IT SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY.
EVEN IF IT IS THAT I DO THAT,
IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU...!
...THAT'S RIGHT.
IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.

pulls
squish
I SAID, RELEASE ME.
I CAN'T LET YOU GO WHEN I'M IN YOU.
RE-LEASE ME
YUMIKOOO, ISN'T AIKAWA-KUN TAKING A LONG TIME?
I WONDER WHAT HAP-PENED
TERADA ALSO SUDDENLY LEFT
TWIST
LOOK, MY PENIS AGREES
THRUST
IT'S SAYING "LET'S GO"

I SEE
NO...
GRABS
YOU WANT TO ENJOY IT EVEN MORE?
...WHAT?
LOOK, SHALL I TOUCH HERE AS WELL?
...
Cheh.
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
STUBBORN...
AH
STOP...
IT'S NO GOOD.
DON'T HOLD BACK
LOOK.
pants pants
licks
IT FEELS GOOD IN REALITY, RIGHT...?
IF HE KEEPS DOING THIS TO ME...

clink
clink
hart
hart
SFX. THRUST
AH
LOOK, YOU HAVE TO GO.
EH?
PLEASE.. PLEASE GO AHEAD OF ME
LEAVE NOW. WHAT WILL YOU DO IF SOMEONE COMES IN?
BUT..
IT'S STILL INSIDE OF ME ..!
BE CAREFUL NOT TO LET IT SPILL OUT.

BANG
NO WAY
LEER
YOU TOOK TOO LONG, AIKAWA—!
WOBBLES
MASUMI?
I ABSOLUTELY CAN'T HOLD IT IN
.....
CLATTER
IT'S NO USE.
YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO CHECK ON YOUR APPEARANCE, RIGHT?
I CAN'T TAKE IT—
YOU CAN'T BE ALREADY DRUNK?
pat
AH.

!!
ARE YOU OKAY?
I HAD WANTED TO GREET YOU WHEN I SAW YOU HERE BUT...
EXCUSE ME.
SPLASH
Kyaaaa!
MY HAND SLIPPED
I'M FINE!
SORRY.. I HAVE TO GET BACK IN A BIT...
Could I get a moist towelette?
Sideway glance
EH?
YES.
WELL, I'LL SEND FOR A TAXI
.....

PLEASE DO IT FOR MASUMI.
RYOUKE-SAN
BANG
DID YOU FOLLOW US?
VROOM
NO WAY.
I JUST WENT INTO THAT RESTAURANT AFTER WORK BY CHANCE
SORRY FOR CAUSING YOU TROUBLE
HEY—
WHY DON'T WE SPEAK FRANKLY WITH EACH OTHER?
WHAT IS YOUR MOTIVE FOR BEING NEAR MASUMI?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
...
DON'T PLAY DUMB WITH ME.

I'M PLANNING TO RECOMMEND BLUE ROSES FOR A PERSON'S WEDDING.
SLAM
YES.
buzz
.....
open

RATTLE
I'LL BE ABLE TO PAY IT.
BESIDES THAT, THIS PLACE IS..
SINCE YOU SAID YOU'LL SPEND HOWEVER MUCH IT TAKES FOR THE CEREMONY,
YOUR ONCE AGAIN FORGOTTEN ITEM
I HEARD IT FROM YUMIKO-CHAN.
HEARD A LOT OF OTHER THINGS TOO.
I STARTED TO WONDER WHAT KIND OF LIFESTYLE YOU'RE LIVING, BUT—
SO YOU DID DO IT WITH THAT TERADA GUY.
NOT ONLY THAT BUT HE WAS YOUR GIRLFRIEND'S LOVER?
.....

SHE IS SUFFERING ALL THE TIME BECAUSE OF YOU.
BECAUSE YOU PESTERED HER INTO MARRIAGE
—IS THAT TRUE?
SHE SAID SHE IS MARRYING YOU OUT OF REVENGE AND THAT SHE IS GOING TO MAKE YOU UNHAPPY.
Cheh
DAMN...
I CAN'T HELP IT
YOU, I MEAN

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO RUN?
. "IMPOS-SIBLE"...
I HAD JUST BEEN SEARCHING ON THE INTERNET
YOU SAID YOU WILL DECORATE WITH BLUE ROSES AND THAT I WILL BE HAPPY. BUT
THE FLOWER MEANING OF BLUE ROSES, I MEAN.
REALLY YOU WERE SAYING SUCH A THING, IS IMPOSSIBLE?
WE—
IN TRUTH, WE'VE MET EACH OTHER BEFORE, RIGHT...?
.....

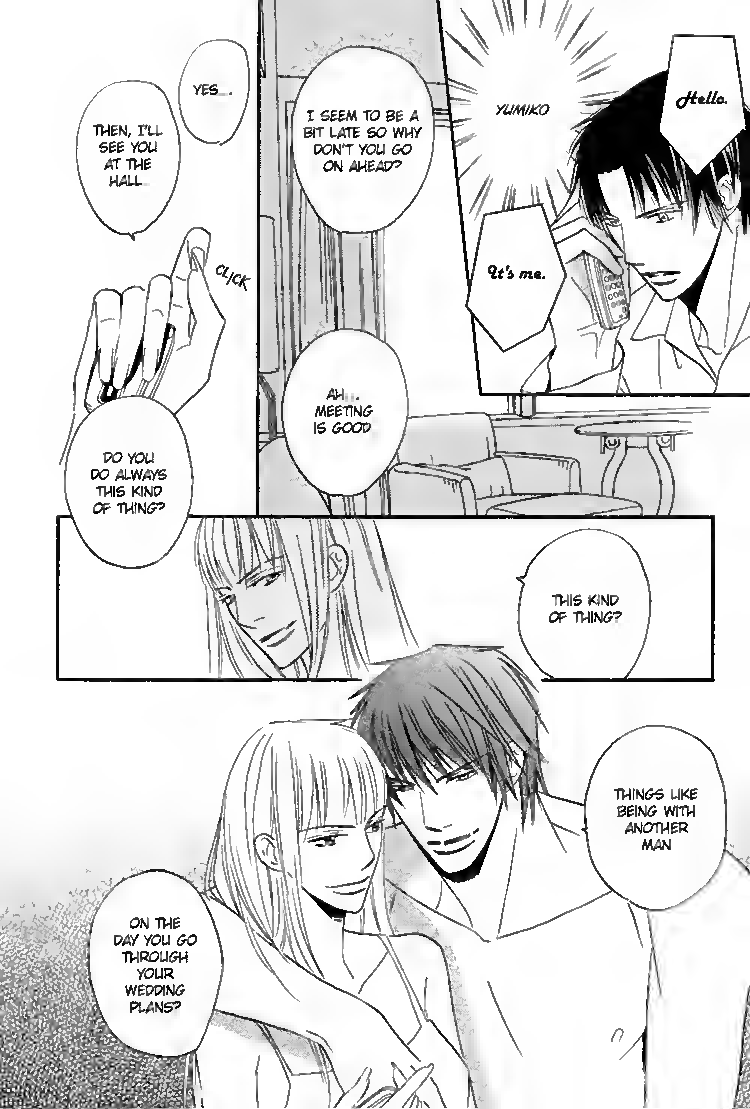
I HOPE YOU WILL FORGIVE ME SOMEHOW.
IF I'VE
...
DONE SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU ANGRY AND
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE DOING WHAT YOU'RE DOING
I HOPE WE HAVE NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER.
AND FURTHER-MORE,
NOT PARTICULARLY.
IT'S NOT THAT

I WANT YOUR HAPPY FACE THAT HAS SUDDENLY APPEARED
AND TO TWIST IT INTO GRIM...CE

THERE IN THAT GARDEN
STOP...!
SOMEBODY—
NO.
NO
I SECRETLY STOLE A ROSE
CAN I LET THAT GUY KEEP ON DOING AS HE LIKES?
—SOMEBODY.
HE WILL TAKE REVENGE ON ME.

THIS SIN—
眠れる花
3rd Story

BEEP
BEEP
BEEP


Hello.
YUMIKO
It's me.
I SEEM TO BE A BIT LATE SO WHY DON'T YOU GO ON AHEAD?
YES...
THEN, I'LL SEE YOU AT THE HALL.
CLICK
AH... MEETING IS GOOD
DO YOU DO ALWAYS THIS KIND OF THING?
THIS KIND OF THING?
THINGS LIKE BEING WITH ANOTHER MAN
ON THE DAY YOU GO THROUGH YOUR WEDDING PLANS?

dips
IT'S BECAUSE I'VE ONLY LIKED ONE PERSON ALL THIS TIME.
IT'S TRUE
IN REGARD TO THAT THIS IS MY FIRST TIME
Chuckle
Chuckle
IT'S NOT AIKAWA, IS IT?
YOU'RE BAD
I WONDER IF THAT'S REALLY TRUE...
BESIDES, WHAT ABOUT YOU, RYOUKE-SAN...
rustle
THAT TERADA GUY FROM BEFORE?
WHATEVER, IT'S IRREL-EVANT.
WHAT?

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE AIMING FOR MASUMI.
WHY?
HE'S A GUY, ISN'T HE?
THAT'S RIGHT, BUT...
YOU'RE GOOD, YUMIKO-SAN
THERE'S NO CONTEST
YEAH
smile
.....
WE'RE GOING TO BE LATE...
HE'S WAITING FOR US

YOU'RE BAD—
SHE'S LATE.
SOMETHING HAD TO HAVE HAPPENED...
MASUMI—!
THE TWO OF THEM TOGETHER...?
HELLO.

WHY ARE YOU TOGETHER WITH RYOUKE-SAN...?
WITH MUCH EFFORT, I GOT RYOUKE-SAN TO ACCOMPANY US TO THE INSPECTION.
I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD IF WE GIVE HIM AN IDEA OF THE IMAGE WE'RE PLANNING ON
WHAT IS IT?
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WAIT..
SINCE I MET HIM ON THE WAY HERE, WE WENT AND HAD TEA.
IT'S OKAY..
BUT YUMIKO'S MOOD SEEMS GOOD
SHALL WE GO BY TAXI?
DID THEY REALLY MEET UP ON THE WAY HERE...?
HEY YOU..

DO YOU PROPERLY SATISFY YOUR FIANCÉE?
EH?
THAT GIRL,
DID YOU KNOW SHE WAS HAVING SEX JUST A WHILE AGO?
WITH ME.
!
YUMIKO AND RYOUKE-SAN WERE?!
WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING?

WHY...
IT'S A NICE RESTAURANT, HUH?
HOW ABOUT WE PUT TABLES AND CHAIRS HERE AND DECORATE WITH FLOWERS?
WHY DID RYOUKE...?
IT'LL PROBABLY BE A NICE WAITING ROOM
THE COURTYARD IS ALSO HERE...
OH, THAT'S TRUE
MR GROOM-TO-BE,
ARE YOU PERHAPS, ALSO PLEASED WITH EVERYTHING?
AH,
ABOUT THAT...
Grrr...
WEREN'T YOU LISTENING CAREFULLY?
Ah!

MASUMI
Chuckle
Chuckle
THE TWO OF THEM—?
THAT RYOUKE—...?
Phew
THERE'S QUITE A NUMBER OF ROOMS, AREN'T THERE?
IT'S BECAUSE THIS PRIVATE ESTATE HAS BEEN ENTIRELY RESTORED

SHALL WE TAKE A BREAK?
There's tea on the other side
ALL RIGHT.
THEN, I WILL
TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THE TERRACE ON THE SECOND FLOOR
...I'M GOING TOO.
STEP
chirp
chirp
chirp
.....!

I SLEPT WITH YOUR FIANCÉE
SHE PUSHED ME INTO COMING HERE
YOU'RE A FOOL..
PLEASE DON'T INVOLVE YUMIKO-CHAN.
WELL, DON'T YOU TWO HAVE SUCH A NICE RELATIONSHIP?

IT'S TRUE THAT YUMIKO MIGHT HATE ME
BUT I WANT TO PROTECT HER
I HAVE TO MAKE HER HAPPY.
I'M ASKING YOU TO NOT COME NEAR HER. .!
.....
YOU REALLY DON'T UNDER-STAND
WHAT'S "I HAVE TO MAKE HER HAPPY"?
DO YOU GET MARRIED FOR THAT KIND OF OBLIGATION?

IN THE BEGINNING, YOU COMPETED WITH A MAN FOR HER, RIGHT?
WHY DEVOTE YOURSELF TO A PERSON WHO DOESN'T LOVE YOU?
ARE YOU HOLDING ON EVEN THOUGH IT'S A WEAKNESS?
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.
THAT IS
SURELY WHY...
EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT,
YOU'RE PROBABLY THE ONE WHO DOESN'T UNDERSTAND

GRAB
STOP MAKING THAT FACE AS IF YOU'RE THE ONLY VICTIM
.....!
WHAT ARE YOU...

STOP IT.
NOT IN THIS TYPE OF PLACE.
LOOK.
...
LIAR.
AND YET YOU WANT ME TO DO IT.
BUT THIS ONE SEEMS TO WANT IT?
...LET GO...
I HATE THIS!
YOU HATE THIS?
WHACK
RUSTLE

EVEN TERADA HAS HAD YOU, RIGHT?
AND BEFORE THAT—
BEFORE THAT...?
OW...
WHILE YOU SAY THAT, YOU'VE LET ME HAVE YOU NUMEROUS TIMES.
!
SNAP
SNAP
SNAP
SNAP
MMPH.

twitch
rub
IF YOU REALLY HATE IT, SHOW ME MORE RESISTANCE.
YOU'RE A GUY SO YOU CAN DO THAT MUCH AT LEAST.
IN ANY CASE, YOU'RE STILL WAITING FOR IT WHILE YOU'RE SAYING YOU HATE IT OR WHATEVER
NO, YOU'RE BEGGING FOR IT.
...I KNOW.

YOU, YOU'RE COMPLICIT
MA-SUMI?
RYOUKE-SAN.
DON'T FORGET IT.
THE CEREMONY WILL BE IN A TENT IN THE GARDEN.
I WOULD LIKE TO SHOW IT TO YOU.
AH,
LET'S GO.

step

IT'S A WONDERFUL TENT
flinch
I'M OKAY
I'M STILL PAYING FOR THIS SIN—
AIKAWA, ARE YOU OKAY?
YOUR FACE IS PALE
pat
I'M A LITTLE OUT OF SORTS...
sorry
click
click
click

THE CEREMONY IS THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, RIGHT?
YOU BETTER FIX THAT SOON.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
Ah, Masumi?
YUMI-CHAN,
I'M SORRY BUT I CAN'T LEAVE IN THE MIDDLE OF WORK.
ABOUT THE DRAGÉE WE'RE HANDING OUT AT THE RECEPTION,
I DON'T LIKE THE RIBBON SO I THOUGHT WE WOULD GO NOW AND SHOP AROUND.
COME OVER.

Well, okay then.
click
Besides, I'm already taking leave from the company for the wedding ceremony and honeymoon.
.....
Sigh
Beep
IF YUMIKO AND I GET MARRIED,
BZZZ
BZZZ
BZZZ
.....

THESE TYPES OF THINGS WILL DEFINITELY CONTINUE
BUT IF THIS ROUTINE KEEPS PILING UP...
IT WILL DEFINITELY BE—
Beep
It's Ryouke.
When you get this message, please quickly—
!

pant
RYOUKE-SAN
WHERE'S YUMIKO?
THEY JUST TOOK HER TO A PRIVATE ROOM...
HER CONDITION?!
SHOCKED
.....!
SHE MIS-CARRIED...

IN THE EVENING,
SHE CALLED ME OVER.
COLLAPSES
IT SEEMS THAT ON HER WAY TO OUR RENDEZ-VOUS,
SHE WAS PUSHED BY A CROWD OF PEOPLE ON THE SUBWAY STAIRS
AND LOST HER FOOTING...

I'M SORRY.
TO THINK THAT SHE WAS PREGNANT WITH YOUR CHILD IS—
—IT'S NOT MINE.
IT'S TERADA'S.
EH?!
HE PROPOSED TO THE DAUGHTER OF THE BOSS AT HIS COMPANY.
AND HE TOLD ME TO TAKE YUMIKO TO THE HOSPITAL FOR AN ABORTION.

YUMIKO HAD ALSO PLANNED ON HAVING AN ABORTION BUT...
BUT I COULDN'T DO IT
IF IT WAS TERADA, THEN YOU MARRYING HER...?
IF...
IF A LIFE THAT HAD BEEN ABANDONED BY SOMEBODY CAN BE SAVED,
AND THAT I DIDN'T EVEN DO A LITTLE TO HELP...

DIDN'T SHE SAY SHE WAS MARRYING YOU OUT OF REVENGE AND THAT SHE WOULD MAKE YOU UNHAPPY?
THAT'S ALL RIGHT.
BUT...
I'D RATHER BE THE OBJECT OF HATRED,
THE ONE WHO IS HATED,
AND PUNISHED.

slide
BUT YUMIKO WILL NO LONGER MARRY ME
AND THE BABY IS NO LONGER THERE
...WHAT AM I GOING TO DO NOW
TO PAY FOR THIS SIN?
SIN—

THE SIN HE COM-MITTED...
PERHAPS THIS
MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SAVED HIM.
pulls

I WON'T FORGIVE YOU.
BUT—
FALL

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO
WILL NOT FORGIVE HIM—

眠れる花
4th Story

YOU SHOULDN'T GO THERE ANYMORE.
NO!
YOU SHOULDN'T OPEN THAT DOOR AGAIN.
CLICK
twitch
AH!

IT'S
MORE..
ALL
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT.
YOUR FAULT,
EVEN IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PUNISHED FOR IT
HELP!

HELP ME
TERADA!
YUMIKO!
WHAT'S WRONG?
SOMEONE, ANYONE...!
.....
ARE YOU HURT?
AH!

ALL RIGHT THERE?
...NH
Haa
Haa
A FEW MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE MASUMI'S FIANCÉE MISCARRIED
HE'S THROWN HIMSELF INTO HIS ACTIVITIES WITH ME
TO DIS-TRACT HIMSELF FROM THAT UGLY REALITY
Sigh
Haa
NO...

ACTUALLY, HE HAS ME WRAPPED AROUND HIS LITTLE FINGER
.....
bzzzz
bzzzz
IS IT YUMIKO?
beep
YOU...
THERE WERE NEVER MEANT TO BE ANY ROMANTIC FEELINGS BETWEEN US
YOU TWO ARE STILL ENGAGED, AREN'T YOU?
.....
I KNOW IT'S WEIRD FOR ME TO ASK YOU THIS,
BUT COULD YOU BE GOOD TO HER FOR A WHILE LONGER?
SHE'S BEEN THROUGH A LOT, AND SHE'S VULNERABLE RIGHT NOW
WHAT?

ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME YOU CALLED IT OFF?
HIS WOMAN MADE IT CLEAR THAT SHE WAS HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH ME,
BUT HE PRETENDED NOT TO NOTICE,
THERE'S NO MORE BABY TO WORRY ABOUT NOW
SINCE HE WAS ONLY WITH HER BECAUSE OF HIS ARBITRARY ATTACHMENT TO THE UNBORN CHILD SHE WAS CARRYING.
.....
YOU SURE
IT'S
NOT THAT SIMPLE!
TALK A GOOD GAME.
CREEK

MM!
brrring
BUT YOU DON'T HAVE A HOPE IN HELL OF CONVINCING ME, YOU KNOW THAT?
NGH
WHOMP
!
brrring
YOU WANT TO ANSWER IT?

plop
plop
twitch
TAKAHISA.
Hmph.
brrring
YOU ASKED ME TO BE GOOD TO HER,
BUT MAYBE YOU SHOULD DO THE SAME FIRST
NGH
clench
UNH
brrring
REMEMBER
brrring
AH!
STOP SNIVELING! YOU WON'T GET ANY SYMPATHY FROM ME.
STAY ON TRACK.

REMEMBER WHAT HE DID TO YOU
AH!
brrrrrrrp
EVERYONE ELSE
MIGHT TURN A BLIND EYE TO HIS HOLLOW EFFORTS, BUT YOU CAN'T.
MM!
brrrrrrrg
beep

boop
boop
walk walk
I'm stuffed
DID YOU HAVE LUNCH, AIKAWA-SAN?
OH,
creak
I WAS A BIT BEHIND.
SO I THOUGHT I'D TRY AND FINISH THIS BY ONE O'CLOCK.
YOU SHOULDN'T DO THAT, AIKAWA-SAN!
tap
tap
tap

WELCOME
CLACK
MAY I HELP—
IS MASUMI HERE?
DILIGENCE IS ALL WELL AND GOOD,
BUT YOU NEED TO EAT, TOO.
AIKAWA-SAN'S
BEEN ILL FOR A WHILE.
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S BEEN A LITTLE TOO LONG?
It's been months and months now.
YUMI-CHAN.
MASUMI!!

TAKAHISA ISN'T ANSWERING THE PHONE.
WHAT?
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU NEVER COME SEE ME AT WORK...
I KNOW YOU'RE SLEEPING WITH HIM!
IS IT AN EMERGENCY?
SMACK
YOU'RE PLANNING TO MESS UP OUR RELATIONSHIP JUST LIKE YOU DID WITH TERADA.
murmur
YU—
YUMI-CHAN.
YOU'VE RUINED MY LIFE!

AIKAWA-SAN IS A GOOD PERSON AND A DILIGENT WORKER.
Grr
AND, WELL... I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE IN SHOCK FROM THE MISCARRIAGE AND YOU HAVE MY SYMPATHIES,
Whisper
Whisper
BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE THAT AIKAWA-SAN WOULD...
MISUNDER-STANDING!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!
AIKAWA-SAN, IS THIS YOUR FIANCEE?
THERE SEEMS TO BE A MISUNDER-STANDING.
MAYBE YOU TWO SHOULD GO SPEAK IN PRIVATE...
...NO,
IT'S TRUE SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH
WHA...
AIKAWA-SAN?

SO PLEASE STOP PUTTING THE BLAME ON HER FOR THIS
SLAM
YUMI-CHAN!
.....
YOU'RE ALWAYS SUCH A HYPOCRITE!
HAH
YOU MAKE ME SICK!

THIS ISN'T GOOD, AIKAWA-SAN
I SHOULD FIRE YOU—
YOU UPSET EVERYONE WITH THAT LITTLE DISPLAY
I'M SORRY, SIR.
AND IF THIS GETS OUT, IT WILL AFFECT THE COMPANY'S IMAGE.
I SUGGEST YOU TAKE A TEMPORARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE.
AFTER ALL, YOU'VE BEEN ILL RECENTLY, AND YOUR WORK HASN'T BEEN PROGRESSING AS IT SHOULD
NO...
YOU SHOULD TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER—

I'LL TENDER MY RESIGNATION
I DON'T WANT TO CAUSE ANY MORE TROUBLE FOR EVERYONE.
ARE...
Gasp
ARE YOU SURE?
AIKAWA-SAN!
ERM...
whisper
whisper
glance
Sigh
THIS WAS THE ONE PLACE WHERE I COULD BE FREE OF MY PAST
YOU'LL BE MISSED

THANKS FOR EVERYTHING...
I LOVED THIS PLACE, BUT...
WHAT SHOULD I DO
LOOK AT THAT!
NOW?
...A RECEPTION WILL BE HELD IT...
BUT IT WAS TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR

THAT FLORIST NAMED RYO LIKE DID THIS, RIGHT?
WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S SOOOO PRETTY!
STRAIGHT OUT OF A FAIRY TALE!
I know him! ♥
HE'S BEEN POPPING UP IN MAGAZINES AND STUFF LATELY
He's so cool!
YOU NEVER SEEK ME OUT.
©Iioka

WHA...
HEY
THUD
LAY INTO ME TEAR ME TO SHREDS
I SAID, CUT IT OUT!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
CUT IT OUT

HUH?
YOU HATE ME, RIGHT?
SINCE
IT WAS MY FAULT YOUR FATHER COMMITTED SUICIDE.

BADUMP
...GNH
HOW LONG HAVE YOU...
DID YOU KNOW RIGHT FROM THE START THAT I WAS HIS SON?

NO, NOT AT FIRST
YOU'D CHANGED YOUR NAME, AND YOU LOOKED COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.
BUT AFTER SEEING YOU A NUMBER OF TIMES,
I REALIZED IT MIGHT BE YOU.
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE YOU AGAIN
YOU...
WANTED TO SEE ME AGAIN...?
MM-HMM.

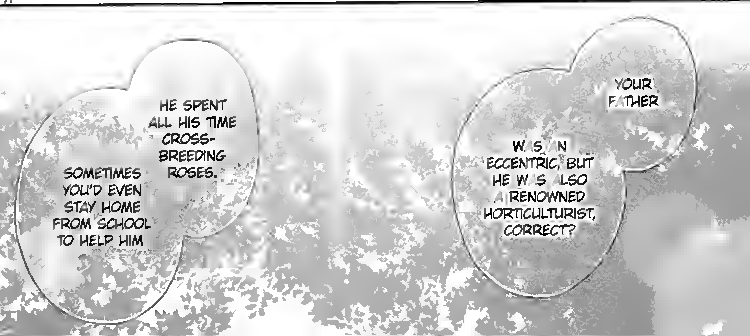
ISN'T THAT WHY YOU GOT CLOSER TO ME?
YOU CAN GET YOUR REVENGE.
RE-VENGE
BECAUSE YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN TRULY PUNISH ME FOR WHAT I DID.
YES
I SWORE I'D GET
MY REVENGE ON HIM
YANK

SO WHY AM I NOT SATISFIED?!
YOU FINALLY ANSWERED THE PHONE.

RUSTLE
OH,
YOU'VE KNOWN HIM SINCE COLLEGE, RIGHT?
BUT YOU KNEW HIM BEFORE I DID, DIDN'T YOU?
TELL ME,
GYY
WHAT SORT OF PERSON IS HE?

DID YOU HIRE A DETECTIVE?
I HAD TO YOU WOULDN'T GIVE ME THE TIME OF DAY.
I LEARNED SO MANY INTERESTING LITTLE TIDBITS

THAT WAS WHEN YOU MET MASUMI
YOU FIRST MET HIM IN YOUR FATHER'S ROSE GARDEN
.....
rustle
LIKE THAT YOU GO BY YOUR MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME THESE DAYS.
AND THAT AFTER YOUR PARENTS' DIVORCE, BEFORE YOUR MOTHER TOOK YOU IN,
YOU LIVED ALONE WITH YOUR FATHER


HE SPENT ALL HIS TIME CROSS-BREEDING ROSES.
SOMETIMES YOU'D EVEN STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL TO HELP HIM.
YOUR FATHER W S N ECCENTRIC, BUT HE W S LSO A RENOWNED HORTICULTURIST, CORRECT?

I ALWAYS HATED HELPING HIM.
MY FATHER THOUGHT OF NOTHING BUT HIS ROSES.
MY MOTHER HAD LEFT A LONG TIME AGO,
I WANTED TO GO OUT AND PLAY CATCH LIKE ALL THE OTHER KIDS.
AND I HAD TO OBEY HIM IF I WANTED TO EAT. I WAS JUST A KID
YOUR FATHER WAS OBSESSED WITH HIS RESEARCH.
NOBODY HAD MANAGED TO CREATE A BLUE ROSE YET—
IF HE BRED ONE,
IT WAS THE STUFF OF MIRACLES
FORTUNE AND FAME WOULD BE HIS

THUD
HE'D ENDURED RIDICULE,
CAST ASIDE HIS FAMILY AND HIS WEALTH,
ALL FOR THIS ROSE, WHICH HE FINALLY PERFECTED
...YES
GOT QUITE FAR WITH HIS RESEARCH, DIDN'T HE?
HE
AND THEN HE WENT AND...

clench
HE INFLICTED HIMSELF ON MY FATHER SO HE'D LET HIM INTO THE GREENHOUSE.
HE ONLY GOT CLOSE TO ME SO HE COULD GET IN THE GARDEN
IT WAS ALL PART OF HIS PLAN TO STEAL THE ROSE!

THAT ROSE WAS EVERYTHING TO MY FATHER WHEN IT WAS STOLEN, HE KILLED HIMSELF.
I HATED THAT LITTLE BASTARD!
BUT WHEN MY MOTHER TOOK ME IN,
I TRIED TO GO OUT AND LIVE MY LIFE I DIDN'T WANT TO BE RULED BY MY DESIRE FOR REVENGE.
BUT THEN...

HE DID IT OUT OF GREED...
THAT'S RIGHT
RIGHT?
IT'S FROM SELLING THE BLUE ROSE, ISN'T IT?!
ALL HIS MONEY.
MONEY IS NO OBJECT — HE'LL PAY WHATEVER IT COSTS.
A HA HA HA HA
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
HAH.
AND I'LL NEVER FORGIVE HIM FOR IT
YOU
HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

MASUMI DIDN'T GET ANY MONEY FOR THE BLUE ROSE
HIS MEAGER FORTUNE
CAME FROM THE SALE OF HIS FAMILY'S PROPERTY AFTER THE FIRE
.....
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
MASUMI DIDN'T TELL YOU?
WHEN HE WAS IN JUNIOR HIGH, HIS HOUSE BURNED TO THE GROUND. THEY THOUGHT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ARSON
THIS WAS RIGHT DURING THE HOUSING BUBBLE, SO THE PROPERTY SOLD FOR ABOUT A HUNDRED MILLION YEN*
THE REST OF HIS FAMILY WERE DEAD, SO ALL THE MONEY WENT TO MASUMI

*T/N: ABOUT 850,000 US DOLLARS.

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT,
.....
THE FIRE HAPPENED AROUND THE SAME TIME AS THE INCIDENT WITH YOUR FATHER.
NOT THAT HE SPENT MUCH OF IT ON HIMSELF — HE LEFT MOST OF IT UNTOUCHED.
SO I DID MY BEST TO SPEND IT FOR HIM.
SOMEONE — SOME ROSE DEALER OR SOMETHING, I DON'T KNOW—
THREATENED HIM WITH THESE PICTURES
OH,
SNAP
AND ONE MORE THING ABOUT YOUR FATHER...
!

THEY DO SHOWCASE HIS ABUSE MARVELOUSLY, AFTER ALL.
HEH HEH HEH
YOU KNOW,
YOU SEEM CONVINCED THAT IT WAS MASUMI WHO WAS THE INSTIGATOR,
BUT WAS THAT REALLY WHAT HAPPENED?

HE WAS ONLY IN JUNIOR HIGH
COULD HE REALLY HAVE PULLED OFF SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

眠れる花
5th Story

IT'S CHILD ABUSE, NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT.
IT CAN'T BE TRUE.
THE ORIGINALS OF THESE PICTURES BELONG TO A PEDOPHILE.
WHAT IN THE WORLD..
APPARENTLY YOUR FATHER TOOK THEM HIMSELF AND GAVE THEM TO HIM
NO.
MY FATHER WOULDN'T...
OH, REALLY?
THE TWO OF THEM SHARED THE SAME TASTES.
Snicker
THAT'S RIDICULOUS. THERE'S NO WAY..
THAT'S A LOAD OF BULLSHIT!
BUT...

I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT THE REASON HE NEVER ALLOWED OTHER ADULTS NEAR THE GARDEN
.....
WAS THAT HE WAS PARANOID ABOUT HIS RESEARCH BEING STOLEN, BUT...
HE DID HIT ME WHEN I DIDN'T TAKE PROPER CARE OF HIS ROSES.
HEY,
MASUMI'S BAD LUCK... ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME YOU DITCHED HIM?
YOU SHOULD FORGET ABOUT HIM AND HOOK UP WITH ME
I'M NOT INTERESTED
.....
I DO HAVE MORE COPIES OF THESE PICTURES, YOU KNOW.

I WONDER WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I SENT THEM TO A WEEKLY?
YOU'RE FAMOUS, AFTER ALL...
HEH HEH
AND MASUMI'S LIFE WOULD BE COMPLETELY RU—
SNATCH
BUT I'LL MAKE SURE YOU REGRET IT FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE
GO AHEAD. DO IT.
.....

I ONLY CAME ON TO YOU BECAUSE YOU WERE MASUMI'S FIANCEE
!
THAT'S THE ONLY REASON I'D SLEEP WITH A BITCH LIKE YOU.
WH—
WHAT...?
whip
GETTING VIOLENT NOW, ARE WE?!
clench
OW...
NOW DARE YOU..
SMACK

SLAM
DON'T THINK YOU CAN COME CRAWLING BACK LATER! I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU!
dmp
dmp
dmp
.....
rustle
A REPORT ON TAKAHISA RYOUKE-SHI AND MASUMI AIKAWA-SHI.
rustle
"...HIS FATHER AVOIDED CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD,
AND ONLY ALLOWED ONE PERSON INTO HIS RESIDENCE AND GARDEN, WHERE HE GREW AND CROSS-BRED ROSES. TAKAHISA-SHI, WHO WAS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME
rustle

IT'S BELIEVED THAT HIS WIFE, FED UP WITH HIS OBSESSION WITH ROSES, DIVORCED HIM
HE EVEN DENIED ENTRANCE TO THE TEACHERS AND RELATIVES WHO CAME TO CHECK UP HIS FAMILY'S SITUATION
THIS WAS MOST LIKELY TO PREVENT KNOWLEDGE OF HIS BREEDING TECHNIQUES FROM BEING LEAKED TO OTHERS
BEC. USE TAKAHISA-SHI'S FATHER FORCED HIM INTO A SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP
WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE THAT AIKAWA-SHI, WHO WAS IN JUNIOR HIGH AT THE TIME, WAS ABLE TO ENTER THE GARDEN
rustle
AND, ISOLATED AS IT WAS, THE GARDEN PROVED AN IDEAL PLACE FOR THEM TO MEET

PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER YOU WOULD LIKE US TO DELVE FURTHER INTO THIS INVESTIGATION"
rustle
THE CAUSE OF THE FIRE REMAINS UNKNOWN.
WHETHER IT HAS ANY RELATION TO THE INCIDENT OF ABUSE IS ALSO UNKNOWN.
HOUSE BURNS TO THE GROUND AT DAWN
ELDEST SON IS THE SOLE SURVIVOR
FURTHERMORE, AROUND THAT SAME TIME, LAND SHARKS DEVELOPED AN INTEREST IN AIKAWA-SHI'S FAMILY'S PROPERTY, AND ARRANGED FOR HIS FAMILY'S HOME TO BE BURNT DOWN
WAS MY FATHER REALLY GUILTY OF CHILD ABUSE?
rustle
ASIDE FROM THE THINGS ABOUT MASUMI,
THIS IS ALL CORRECT.
COULD THAT REALLY HAVE HAPPENED
TO MASUMI?

WELL...
HE REALLY WAS DAZZLING BACK THEN.
I LOOKED FORWARD TO HIS OCCASIONAL VISITS.
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?
H-
HELLO
HELLO.
ER. .M.
BLIDDING ..
WOW
AND I WANTED TO TOUCH HIM.
gasp

WANT SOMETHING TO DRINK?
NO...
OH.
I'LL GO TAKE A BATH, TH-
GRIP
I WANTED TO TOUCH HIM?
rise

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED IN OUR GARDEN... PLEASE
TELL ME
BECAUSE I WAS PLAYING CATCH AND ACCIDENTALLY THREW THE BALL INTO THE GARDEN
IT ALL STARTED
I GOT IT BACK FROM YOU,
THEN GOT CURIOUS AND STARTED EXPLORING
.....

BUT INSTEAD, HE TOOK ME INTO THE GREENHOUSE
I THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO YELL AT ME,
YOUR FATHER CALLED ME..
UM...
HE TOOK SOME EMBARRASSING PICTURES OF ME, TOO
AFTER THAT, I WENT INTO THE GREENHOUSE WITH HIM WHENEVER HE SUMMONED ME..
I STILL DREAM ABOUT IT NOW IT GIVES ME THE CREEPS

ONE DAY,
HEY, YOU
ARE GOING TO JUMP OUT AND ATTACK ME.
IT FEELS LIKE THE ROSES SHUT AWAY IN THE GREENHOUSE.
ARE YOU HURT?
A MAN CAME UP AND SPOKE TO ME AS I WAS LEAVING THE GREENHOUSE
"DO YOU WANT HIM TO KEEP ON USING YOU?"
THE BLUE ROSE HE'S GROWING IN THE GREEN-HOUSE."
"I KNOW."
"GET YOUR REVENGE ON HIM. STEAL THE THING HE HOLDS MOST DEAR,

I THOUGHT YOUR FATHER DESERVED IT
AFTER WHAT HE DID TO ME.
BUT
THEN I FOUND OUT HE'D COMMITTED SUICIDE...
YOUR FATHER DIED BECAUSE
I'M A MURDERER.
I STOLE HIS PRECIOUS BLUE ROSE
AND I WAS PUNISHED FOR IT...
THAT'S THE ONLY EXPLANATION THAT MAKES SENSE

FOR MY PARENTS' SUDDEN DEATH?
WHAT OTHER REASON COULD THERE HAVE BEEN
IT'S TRUE
THAT I WANTED TO SEE
THAT CHILD FROM THE GARDEN AGAIN — THAT I WANTED TO SEE YOU AGAIN, TAKAHISA.
DAD..
HOW COULD YOU?!
THOUGH THAT DESIRE WAS OUT-WEIGHED BY MY DREAD.

I STOLE THE ROSE
I'M SORRY
I KNOW APOLOGIZING ISN'T ENOUGH I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO FORGIVE ME
AND KILLED YOUR FATHER ..
THUNK
ROLL

WHOOSH
I'M SORRY.
.....

IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT.
.....
WHAT...?
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY SINS TO ATONE FOR
SO...

!
SLAM
I'LL NEVER DARKEN YOUR DOORSTEP AGAIN
RYOUKE-SAN!
I ALWAYS THOUGHT WE WERE THE VICTIMS,
THAT HE HAD MESSED UP OUR LIVES

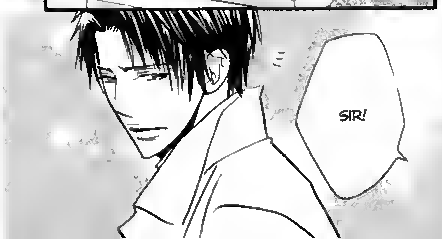
I MADE MASUMI SUFFER HORRIBLY
FOR A SIN HE NEVER COMMITTED
NOW IT TURNS OUT THAT WE WERE THE ONES WHO RUINED HIS.
WHAT HAVE I DONE?
Haa
clench
Haa
Haa

THAT'S WHY I'VE ALWAYS DESIRED HIM,
AND WHY IT HURT WHEN HE DIDN'T REMEMBER ME.
Hua
I'VE BEEN IN LOVE WITH MASUMI
FOR A LONG TIME.

WHY AM I ONLY REALIZING THIS NOW?

NO NEED.
I'M SORRY
YES, SENSEI HAS BEEN OUT FOR A WHILE NOW.

HE'S. .
OUT?


SIR!

I CAN PASS ON A MESSAGE, IF YOU'D LIKE
NO, THANK YOU.
GOOD-BYE
SENSEI,
I FEEL BAD ABOUT PRETENDING YOU'RE OUT.
.....
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT TO DO?
HE'S LOOKING MORE AND MORE HAGGARD
TAKAHISA'S BEEN AVOIDING ME SINCE THAT DAY

AND I WENT AND LAUNCHED MYSELF AT HIM LIKE THAT
I SUPPOSE IT MAKES SENSE.
HE PROBABLY NEVER WANTED TO SEE HIS FATHER'S MURDERER IN THE FIRST PLACE.
SAYING IT WAS MY PUNISHMENT FOR WHAT I'D DONE.
I SHAMELESSLY SOUGHT HIM OUT AGAIN AND AGAIN.
FOR HIM, IT WAS JUST ANOTHER FORM OF VIOLENCE, NO DIFFERENT FROM HITTING ME
BUT I GOT SO INTO IT...

clack
clack
clack
.....
brrrring
THESE ARE...
START
!
brrrring

Well, I showed them to Takahisa.
CLICK
HELLO?
It's me, Yumiko.
Did you see the photos on your door?
WHAT?!
It came as quite a shock to him. He was disgusted.
.....
rustle
TELL ME SOME-THING

beep
beep
beep
Why are there people like you in this world?
I'VE BROUGHT NOTHING BUT UNHAPPINESS TO EVERYONE.
I COULDN'T ATONE FOR MY SIN
I COULDN'T PROTECT YUMIKO'S CHILD
SHE'S RIGHT.
WHAT PURPOSE DOES MY LIFE SERVE?

creak
THUMP
rustle
rustle

rustle
IT'S STILL HERE.
THAT PLACE.
CREAK

CRUNCH
rustle
MAYBE I SHOULD JUST..
IT USED TO BE SO FRIGHTENING, BUT NOW .
.....

THEN I WOULDN'T CAUSE ANY MORE TROUBLE FOR ANYONE,
WITHER AWAY TOGETHER WITH THIS GREENHOUSE.
OR HAVE TO ENDURE PEOPLE'S CONTEMPT
IF I JUST LET IT ALL END HERE
WHAT'S WRONG?
.....

I WISH THAT HE'D LOOKED AT ME WITH KINDNESS JUST ONCE MORE . . . THE KINDNESS HE SHOWED ME AS A CHILD
THOUGH THAT'S ONE THING I COULD NEVER HOPE TO HAVE HAPPEN.
I KNEW YOU'D BE HERE
crunch
RYOUKE-SAN!
WHY ARE YOU...

YOU CAME BY MY OFFICE, DIDN'T YOU?
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU, SO I WENT AFTER YOU
THEN I FOUND THESE AT YOUR APARTMENT
!
CRUMPLE
DON'T LOOK AT THEM!
jerk
rustle
I'M SORRY

I'M TRULY SORRY FOR EVERYTHING I'VE DONE
.....
I'M A MURDERER I KILLED YOUR FATHER, REMEMBER?!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
THAT'S NOT TRUE!
IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT
MY FATHER KILLED HIMSELF BECAUSE SOMEONE THREATENED TO GO PUBLIC WITH THOSE PHOTOS.
IT WASN'T BECAUSE YOU STOLE THE BLUE ROSE
.....

MY FATHER...
MOLESTED YOU...
YOU WERE THE VICTIM.
IT WASN'T MY FAULT?
THAT'S RIGHT.
IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT, AND I DID ALL THOSE HORRIBLE THINGS TO YOU...
THEN WHEN I FOUND OUT THE TRUTH,
I RAN AWAY FROM YOU,
EVEN THOUGH I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU RIGHT AWAY

.....
I WAS TOO BUSY THINKING ABOUT ALL THE MISTAKES I'D MADE.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU KNEW BEFORE.
BUT
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
jerk
grimace
I WISH WE'D NEVER MET THAT DAY.

I'VE BROUGHT YOU NOTHING BUT PAIN.
I WISH I'D NEVER REALIZED HOW I FELT ABOUT YOU.
I'M STILL GLAD WE MET.

.....
WHY ..?
.....

.....
Hah
LET'S GO OUTSIDE
rustle
crunch
...NH
shudder

THAT'S NOT IT.
I'M SURE THIS PLACE EVOKES A LOT OF BAD MEMORIES FOR YOU, TOO.
whip
I'M SORRY THIS WASN'T A GOOD IDEA
I'M JUST SO HAPPY.
EVERY TOUCH FROM YOU TURNS ME ON MORE THAN EVER
I WANT YOU TO DO ME RIGHT NOW.
tug
NH
MMM!

WAIT,
AH.
...NH.
RYOUKE-SAN!
TA—
I CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER.
MASUMI.
TAKAHISA.
SHIVER

I—
YES!
DOES IT FEEL GOOD, MASUMI?
slch
MM!
I WANT YOU RIGHT NOW!
ANH!
shlp
ALL RIGHT
MMM!
Hm
YOU ALL RIGHT?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

TA.
TAKA-HISA!
ARE YOU HURT?
I'M NOT HURTING YOU?
I'M SO HAPPY.
I LOVE YOU, TAKAHISA.
AH.
THAT I CAN SAY THOSE WORDS NOW
I LOVE YOU!

I LOVE YOU, TOO
YES,

MAYBE SOME SURVIVED, AND THEY'RE BLOOMING NOW
SPRING IS COMING, YOU KNOW
I SMELL ROSES
THAT'S RIGHT.
THE ROSES AREN'T GOING TO COME AFTER ME AGAIN

THEY'VE AWOKEN NOW,
AND THEY'RE GIVING US THEIR BLESSING, BLOOMING IN ALL THEIR GLORY.
End

海老原由里

YURI EBIHARA

Born February 2-4, Pisces, Type O.
Lives in Nara-ken
I've made a homepage!
can also meet my family cat
Come and play, okay? ♥

http://www.y-ebihara.com/

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心交社

眠れる花

海老原由里

心交社

Aikawa Masumi whose impending wedding is close at hand, coincidently encounters the spirited up-and-coming florist Ryouke Takahisa whom he came to ask to buy a wedding bouquet from. However, he was attacked at his office after having a meeting with the guy. He was violently taken with what seemed like extreme hatred that was held for him. "Only you, I will not forgive. Never." What in the world is the meaning of that guy's words ?!

Sweet Nectar

FUFFE
I'M ASKING WHY YOU'RE GOING
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ALL SHE'S DONE TO YOU?
NO,
WHY?
Beats me
SHE WANTS TO GIVE SOMETHING BACK
WELL,
I CAN'T JUST ABANDON HER.
AND BESIDES, I HURT HER, TOO.
MASUMI IS TOO NICE.
.....

DON'T GO.
IT WAS WHAT ALLOWED HIM TO FORGIVE ME.
click
HIS SWEET NATURE
IS THE RESULT OF HIS PREOCCUPATION WITH THE SIN HE THOUGHT HE COMMITTED.
JUST TELL HER I KEPT YOU FROM LEAVING.
BUT I WANT TO TAKE ON THE BURDEN OF HIS SIN FOR HIM.
TAKA-HISA.

LET ME LOSE MYSELF IN THE TASTE OF
THE SWEET,
SWEET
NECTAR OF YOUR SIN.
End

• This is the afterword.

This the third book of manga I've published through Shinkosha, and it ended up being a bit of a dark story again.

Partway through its run, this story moved to a different magazine. The first magazine went on hiatus, so there were some hassles with that. But now the book is coming out during the season of roses, which I'm very pleased about. ♥

I'm indebted to the editor in charge of my work, Hasegawa-sama. Also to my line of assistants, who bravely fought through the hell of drawing all those roses. Thank you so much!

And to those of you reading now, who took the time not only to read the book but to read all the way through to the last page, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I hope you enjoy it.

I hope we meet again someday. ♥

May 2006
Yuri Ebihara

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Akihiro Shino
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Hina Yamato
Funo
Shuu Hinata
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この本を読んでのご意見、ご感想をお寄せ下さい。
作者へのお手紙もお待ちしております。

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眠れる花

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